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MILWAUKEE COUNTY LAND AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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Milwaukee County Land and Water Resource Management Plan
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PLAN SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In 1996, Land and Water Conservation professionals throughout Wisconsin forged the County Land and Water Resource Management Plan concept. This was done partly in response to a state legislative call to "redesign" Wisconsin's non-point source pollution abatement programs. The Land and Water Resource Management Plan concept grew out of the need to establish a process that ensured local decision-making and improved program delivery mechanisms. The process was to utilize local, state and federal funds with greater effectiveness toward the protection of land and water resources. In 1997, the Land and Water Resource Management Plan concept became law, as Chapter 92 of the Wisconsin Statutes was amended. This created a County Land and Water Resource Management Planning Program that is intended to 1) rely on a locally driven process for plan development and implementation; 2) maximize flexibility in how program funds are used; 3) foster comprehensive watershed-based efforts without excessive planning; 4) support innovation and cost effectiveness toward achieving objectives; 5) foster the "seamless" integration of programs and funding sources; and 6) establish a credible means to measure the extent to which planned objectives are achieved.

Chapter 92 is the enabling legislation that provides counties, through their Land Conservation Committees, the formal authority to develop a County Land and Water Resource Management Plan. This plan provides structured means that will integrate and leverage available programs, funds, and other resources to:

- Guide the process for resource management planning and decision making;
- Compile information for evaluating land and water resource conditions;
- Identify land and water related resource problems and priorities;
- Develop a multi-year work plan to address land and water resource problems by watershed;
- Strengthen partnerships with landowners, other agencies, municipalities, and organizations;
- Integrate efforts with other county and basin level Natural Resource Management Plans;
- Coordinate with Township and County comprehensive land-use planning efforts;
- Develop effective information and education strategies that will strengthen and maintain community support for the planned Land and Water Resource Management Plan goals and objectives; and
- Track progress toward the achievement of the plan's goals and objectives.

The goal of the Milwaukee County Land and Water Resource Management Plan is to restore, improve, and protect ecological diversity and quality, and promote the beneficial uses of the land, water, and related resources found throughout the County. The Milwaukee County Land and Water Resource Management Plan was designed to assist agencies that manage land in protecting and improving water and land resources in Milwaukee County. Goals established in the plan will help guide County and other agency initiatives from 2006 to 2010, a five-year

period. The goals also provide the basis for funding those initiatives from various private, local, state, and federal sources. Used as a tool to guide and coordinate a variety of agencies and programs, the plan streamlines decision-making and program administration. The process to revise the plan for another five-year period will begin in 2010. Progress toward reaching plan goals will be evaluated each year.

A Summary Outline of the Milwaukee County Land and Water Resource Management Plan is presented below:

Chapter 1. Introduction
Chapter 2. Physical description of Milwaukee County and natural resource initiatives
- Geography, population, climate, physiographic features
- Geology and soils
- Water resources
  - Groundwater resources
  - Surface water resources
    - Milwaukee River South Watershed
    - Menomonee River Watershed
    - Kinnickinnic River Watershed
    - Oak Creek Watershed
    - Root River Watershed
    - Lake Michigan Shoreline
  - Point source and nonpoint source pollution initiatives
- Information management and distribution

Chapter 3. Land use trends, resource and issue identification
Chapter 4. Goals, objectives and work plan
Chapter 5. Progress and evaluation
Appendices: Project updates, completed goal evaluation forms, references

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Development of this plan involved identifying and prioritizing land and water resource issues of concern and strategizing ways to address them. Input from a wide variety of stakeholders and the public was sought concerning the individual goals and objectives of this plan (see Appendix 1 for more detailed discussion). Comments received from these stakeholders, which include Land & Water Basin Team Leaders in the Milwaukee River Basin, citizen advisory groups, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), were used to refine goals and objectives to better reflect current conditions and issues. The plan was approved by the Milwaukee County Board on April 13, 2006.

ASSESSMENT OF WATER QUALITY, SOIL EROSION, AND NONPOINT SOURCES

Milwaukee County waterways include five main watersheds, the Milwaukee River South, the Menomonee River, the Kinnickinnic River, the Root River, and Oak Creek (see Figure 4, page X). The Lake Michigan Shoreline is considered a sixth watershed for purposes of this plan. Three of the watersheds, Milwaukee River South, the Menomonee River and the Kinnickinnic

River are part of the Milwaukee River Basin. Of these, only the Kinnickinnic River watershed is located fully within Milwaukee County. The Root River and Oak Creek watersheds are part of the Root-Pike River Basin. Complete discussions of water quality information for each of the watersheds are available within each respective, comprehensive water quality plan and/or basin report. Non-point sources of pollution in the county include eroding agricultural lands, eroding stream-banks and roadsides, erosion from developing urban areas, and runoff from established urban areas.

NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION CONTROL INITIATIVES IN MILWAUKEE COUNTY

State performance standards for agricultural and non-agricultural nonpoint pollution sources, developed by the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, were set forth in 2002. The standards address methods for controlling sediment runoff at construction sites, managing stormwater, controlling nutrient runoff, and reducing cropland soil erosion.

Since Milwaukee County is entirely incorporated, each municipality within Milwaukee County is charged with implementing and enforcing the agricultural and non-agricultural standards. To implement the non-agricultural standards, municipalities have developed a Construction Site Erosion Control (CSEC) ordinance in accordance with state law. This ordinance details compliance, enforcement, and appeal procedures relating to the non-agricultural performance standards. Milwaukee County currently follows municipal ordinances relating to the non-agricultural standards when applicable. In addition to local requirements, on a construction site of greater than one acre, an appropriate construction site erosion control plan must be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources or the Wisconsin Department of Commerce for review and approval.

Each municipality is also responsible for implementing the NR 151 agricultural standards and prohibitions. Milwaukee County currently follows municipal ordinances relating to the standards and prohibitions when applicable (i.e., Milwaukee County Zoo operations, farmland owned by Milwaukee County). As Milwaukee County is entirely incorporated and farming makes up a small percentage of the overall land use, this plan focuses more on compliance with the non-agricultural standards than with the agricultural standards. However, ensuring that applicable operations are in compliance with the agricultural standards is still a priority for Milwaukee County.

In order to ensure that all croplands and agricultural operations in Milwaukee County are in compliance with the NR 151 agricultural standards and prohibitions, cost-share and technical assistance will be provided to "Priority Farms and Operations." Priority Farms/Operations are those that are non-compliant with the state prohibitions and performance standards, have received a "Notice of Discharge" (NOD), and are adjacent to sensitive water resource areas.

Identification of priority farms/operations may occur through a review of existing records, interagency consultation, and annual monitoring. Owners of fields/operations that are not in compliance with the NR 151 standards will be notified following the annual monitoring. Milwaukee County staff will work with UW Extension, NRCS, and FSA staff to educate owners

about Best Management Practices (BMPs), conservation initiatives, and cost share programs that can be used to bring their fields/operations into compliance.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND DISTRUBUTION

Information sharing and educational outreach initiatives are critical to the County's long-term ability to protect natural resources. To be proactive in providing citizens, natural resource professionals, and the development community with the information needed for them to embrace environmental initiatives and make informed decisions, Milwaukee County developed a County-wide Geographic Information System (GIS) that contains all of the GIS data available within the County. This data is essential for planning for future development, protecting sensitive natural resources, and improving existing stormwater infrastructure. The data is expected to be made available to the general public via the municipal internet portals soon.

Training opportunities that provide up-to-date information and technologies related to stormwater and natural resource issues and regulations are vital for advancing progress toward meeting the goals in the Land and Water Resource Management Plan. Milwaukee County employees have worked with a variety of partners to host in-house workshops and public seminars covering stormwater issues. In addition, the County supports efforts by the University of Wisconsin Extension Service to conducts outreach and training related to natural resource issues.

LAND AND WATER RESOURCES: ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Most citizens in Milwaukee County believe that substantial social, economic and environmental change will occur over the next fifty years. All seem to want acquisition and protection of green and open space to bring them closer to their vision of a sustainable, desirable Wisconsin for their children. The Milwaukee County Department of Transportation and Public Works - Environmental Services\Land Conservation Department initiated the development of the initial Land and Water Management Plan by: gathering input from the Parks, Energy, Environment and Extension Education Committee; compiling results of public meetings initiated by the DNR in January and February 2000, with representation from local and state conservation and recreation organizations; collecting information from DNR questionnaire and citizen survey responses on the needs related to important natural resource issues; and reviewing the top issues identified and prioritized by Milwaukee River Basin conservation professionals.

Based on a review of issues characterized and prioritized by the groups referenced above, the top issues were identified for consideration (reference Table below). On-going dialogue with the public and stakeholders, such as Land & Water Basin Team Leaders in the Milwaukee River Basin, citizen advisory groups, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), has indicated that the top natural resource issues in Milwaukee County have not changed significantly since 2000. As such, the goals in this updated plan are similar to that of the initial plan. The objectives have changed, since they build upon progress made over the past five years. They also reflect the issues that are currently at the forefront of resource management.

Top Natural Resource Issues Identified for Milwaukee County (2000)
Loss of wetlands, woodlands, quality farmland, environmental corridors and other green space due to development pressure: need for preservation of unique natural areas; endangered, threatened and rare species preservation; habitat restoration and enhancement; loss of wetlands due to filling/development encroachment; loss and fragmentation of Environmental Corridors and wildlife habitat; protection and restoration of riparian areas; financial support for purchase of conservation easements, particularly for riparian areas.
Nonpoint Source Pollution Control: Need for buffers along waterways (perennial and intermittent streams); concern about surface water pollution (streams, rivers) caused by urban and suburban runoff pollution; urban storm water management; soil erosion from construction sites; flooding; contamination of sediment caused by excessive runoff; adoption of comprehensive stormwater management plans by all cities, villages, and towns; overall, need for improvement of water quality by controlling nonpoint sources of pollution; need for training and enforcement to assure more uniform erosion control ordinances.
Lake Michigan Shoreline: Lakeshore bluff erosion; beach erosion; shoreline recession; public access; shoreline erosion control measures.
Need for local, publicly-available natural resource education and information support programs, including GIS and a county web page: Need for informative web page to disseminate available GIS layers, current news, standards and educational materials related to local water quality issues in Milwaukee County; invasive and exotic plant identification and controls; and nuisance wildlife management control measures.

SUMMARY OF WORK PLAN: GOALS, ACTIONS, BUDGET

The overall goals of this Milwaukee County Land and Water Resource Management Plan are to restore, improve, and protect ecological diversity and quality, as well as to promote the beneficial uses of its land, water, and related resources. To accomplish this, the specific goals of this Plan are to:

Goal 1: Improve Water Quality through the Reduction of Sediment and Nutrient Delivery to Surface Waters in Milwaukee County.

Goal 2: Protect, Restore and Enhance Wetlands, Grasslands, Woodlands, Environmental Corridors, Quality Farmland, and Natural Areas, including those located within Milwaukee County-owned Parks and Open Spaces.

Goal 3: Enhance Lake Michigan Bluff Protection Initiatives.

Goal 4: Effectively Use and Maintain the Existing Information Management Network, and establish a Land Information Web Portal to Distribute GIS Data.

The following work plan breaks these goals down into more detailed and readily measurable steps (in the form of objectives and actions) toward reaching each goal. Information and education initiatives are critical components of the objectives. Success in meeting resource goals requires that both citizens and Milwaukee County employees make behavioral changes to protect water resources. Individuals will not make these changes unless they understand the importance of water resources, the ways to protect those resources, and are aware of available assistance.

WORK PLAN IMPLEMENTATION, PROGRESS TRACKING, MONOTORING AND EVALUATION

Satisfying these goals will meet the primary objective of this plan, which is to achieve a significant reduction in sediment delivery within the next 5–10 years, along with building a stewardship ethic into urbanization activities. The goals in this plan will be implemented over a five-year period beginning in 2007 and running through 2011. They represent priorities for land and water resource management for Milwaukee County. The individual objectives, detailed within the Milwaukee County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, provide a work plan with readily measurable steps toward reaching each goal.

To ensure successful implementation of the Land & Water Resource Management Plan, goals and objectives will be reviewed and evaluated several times throughout each year. Monitoring the improvement of the land and water resources of Milwaukee County will indicate the actual measure of success of the Land and Water Resource Management Plan. While there may not be dollars available for in-depth monitoring, monitoring programs are already in place. Milwaukee County will continue to work closely with partners who provide monitoring information and will encourage expansion of their monitoring programs.

CONCLUSION

Milwaukee County has a long-standing record of leadership and participation in natural resource protection and improvement, such as stream bank stabilization, establishment of environmental corridors and protection of floodplains. These natural resource protection and improvement measures have included prior plan development, program design and project implementation, which all emphasize cooperation and integration to get good value from the available funding.

Many of the goals referenced in this Plan are consistent with on-going efforts of existing local programs. Some of the objectives will be further developed in later years of the plan. Progress towards these goals will be subject to funding available from all sources, both County and otherwise. Adoption of the LWRMP by Milwaukee County makes it available as a guide for local municipalities who may wish to work cooperatively with the County on local projects.

2007–2011 WORK PLAN

GOAL 1. Improve Water Quality through the Reduction of Sediment and Nutrient Delivery to Surface Waters within Milwaukee County.

OBJECTIVES (Listed in order of ranked priority)	ACTIONS	WHO (Lead agency listed first)	PROGRESS TRACKING	ESTIMATED COUNTY STAFF NEEDS	ESTIMATED OTHER COSTS
Encourage public awareness of water quality problems and stormwater issues. Ensure that County staff is adequately trained to develop strategies or implement technologies to solve water quality problems.	Continue to work with local agencies and organizations to hold educational workshops and conferences designed to train consultants, inspectors, municipalities, developers, and County personnel about the latest technologies and regulatory codes relating to stormwater and water quality issues.	UWEX, DNR, DTPW-ES	• Assist in hosting at least one workshop per year regarding stormwater or water quality issues.	$10,000 annually	$2,000 annually outreach costs
Implement NR 216 Stormwater Requirements.	Implement NR 216 Stormwater Requirements. As part of the Milwaukee County Stormwater Process, monitor the levels of chloride entering surface waters within the County from roadways treated with de-icing salts.	DNR, DTPW-ES	• Compliance with WPDES NR216 Permit once issued. • Conduct chloride study (per DNR approval). • Obtain NR 216 stormwater permit or work through local communities to achieve similar objectives.	$50,000 annually	$200,000 annually
Work with the Southeast Wisconsin Beach Task Force (SWBTF) to identify and implement measures to prevent future beach closings resulting from bacterial contamination.	Assist researchers working to identify sources of bacterial pollution by providing access to pertinent information or research findings (i.e., findings from the storm sewer study). Continue current actions such as beach grading and grooming. Complete storm sewer evaluation at Bradford beach. Implement recommendations of storm sewer evaluation as agreed upon by Milwaukee County and WDNR.	WDNR, DTPW-ES, Parks, SWBTF	• Continue to work with SWBTF to solve issues relating to beach closings and bacterial contamination. • Compliance with WPDES NR216 permit. • Completion of project recommended by storm sewer evaluation.	$185,000	$1,400,000 capital costs
Implement recommendations relating to soil erosion and water quality in the Milwaukee County Parks Agricultural Lands Resource & Lease Value Analysis.	Re-instate the 75-foot buffer requirement along waterways on all leased land. Work with lessees and state agencies to install buffers and filter strips. Enroll farmed wetlands in CRP (or similar programs).	Parks, Lessees, DTPW-ES, NRCS, USDA	• Re-instate the 75 foot buffer requirement. • Install filter strips and/or buffers in five agricultural parcels. • Enroll parcels used for marsh hay in CRP.	$30,000	$100,000

2007–2011 WORK PLAN

GOAL 1. Improve Water Quality through the Reduction of Sediment and Nutrient Delivery to Surface Waters within Milwaukee County.

OBJECTIVES (Listed in order of ranked priority)	ACTIONS	WHO (Lead agency listed first)	PROGRESS TRACKING	ESTIMATED COUNTY STAFF NEEDS	ESTIMATED OTHER COSTS
Continue to conduct and promote streambank stabilization projects, as well as projects employing Best Management Practices (such as vegetative buffers) to reduce erosion and improve water quality. Projects will be based on the Streambank Assessment Report.	Encourage the use of buffers or other BMPs in all stormwater or streambank-related projects. Work with stakeholders to seek funding and complete high priority projects listed in the Streambank Assessment Report. As projects are completed, work with stakeholders and project partners to increase public awareness about the causes leading to bank erosion and the efforts made to correct the problems through press releases, web pages, and/or educational displays.	DTPW-ES, Parks, DATCP, DNR, USACE, Milwaukee River Basin Partnership, UWEX, NRCS	• Install ten buffers as part of stormwater or streambank-related projects. • Complete three high priority projects listed in the Streambank Assessment Report by 2011. • Issue three news releases associated with the projects.	$30,000 annually	$200,000 annually
Implement the recommendations outlined in the Pond and Lagoon Management Plan.	Conduct the three pilot studies recommended by the Pond and Lagoon Management Plan. Use the results of the studies to identify the techniques that are most successful and cost-effective, and in what situation they are most effective. Rank water bodies within the Park System based on water quality and potential for improvement. Post educational signs at the pilot study areas to inform Park visitors about the problems at the Lagoons and the methods for improving water quality.	DTPW-ES, Parks, DNR	• Conduct the three pilot studies. • Post an educational sign at each of the study sites. • Rank the water bodies within the Park System.	$70,000	$300,000 capital costs

2007–2011 WORK PLAN

GOAL 1. Improve Water Quality through the Reduction of Sediment and Nutrient Delivery to Surface Waters within Milwaukee County.

OBJECTIVES (Listed in order of ranked priority)	ACTIONS	WHO (Lead agency listed first)	PROGRESS TRACKING	ESTIMATED COUNTY STAFF NEEDS	ESTIMATED OTHER COSTS
Comply with the NR 151 Agricultural Performance Standards.	Continue to monitor agricultural fields and operations (including the Milwaukee Zoo) for compliance with the NR 151 standards and prohibitions. Develop a database for tracking the status and monitoring of agricultural operations. Notify owners of non-compliant operations/fields. Promote the use of BMPs and conservation initiatives through cost share programs and technical assistance to address problems and bring operations/fields into compliance.	Local gov't, DTPW-ES,	• Annually monitor agricultural fields and operations to ensure compliance of the standards and prohibitions in Milwaukee County. • Develop a database for monitoring of fields/operations. • Conduct a soil loss transect survey to determine "T" once every planning period. • Identify Priority Farms/ Operations and notify noncompliant operators. • Provide cost share and technical assistance to Priority Farm landowners to implement BMPs.	$20,000 annually	$40,000 annually

2007–2011 WORK PLAN

GOAL 2. Protect, Restore and Enhance Wetlands, Grasslands, Woodlands, Environmental Corridors, Quality Farmland, and Natural Areas, including those located within Milwaukee County-owned Parks and Open Spaces.

OBJECTIVES (Listed in order of ranked priority)	ACTIONS	WHO (Lead agency listed first)	PROGRESS TRACKING	ESTIMATED COUNTY STAFF NEEDS	ESTIMATED OTHER COSTS
Continue to pursue opportunities to protect, enhance and/or restore wetlands, grasslands, and woodlands and/or woody wildlife cover. Maintain woodlands, grasslands and prairies within the County using recognized management techniques.	Establish partnerships as applicable through Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), watershed programs, Conservation Reserve Programs (CRP), and DNR/USFWS Wetland Restoration Initiative. Effectively utilize efforts by the Trails and Natural Areas Crew (TNAC) and volunteer groups to manage and maintain Parks lands.	Parks, DTPW-ES, NRCS, DATCP, DNR, USFWS, TNAC, Volunteer groups	• Restart the native plant nursery. • Bring invasive species levels to low maintenance level in five areas within the County Park System. • Establish new and maintain existing public/private partnerships.	$123,000 annually	$130,000 annually capital costs
Increase public awareness of the value of wetlands, grasslands, and woodlands by promoting educational programs in Milwaukee County Parks and by encouraging volunteer groups to assist with the management of native habitats.	Encourage natural areas management by volunteer groups by organizing volunteer workdays at Milwaukee County Parks. Use these opportunities to educate volunteers and local citizens about the features and importance of natural habitats and their stressors through short presentations, educational materials and displays, and press releases.	Parks, Volunteers, DTPW-ES, DATCP, FSA	• Encourage volunteer efforts by holding ten volunteer workdays in Milwaukee County Natural Areas per year. • Issue a press release related to the workdays. • Educate volunteers about why their efforts are important through short talks, hand-outs, etc.	$5,000 annually	
Identify and acquire high quality natural areas, in accordance with the Milwaukee County Parks & Open Space Plan.	Work with local conservation groups (Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy, Green Seams) and municipalities to identify high-quality natural areas that should be protected. Work with stakeholders to develop a plan, follow-up with landowners, and administer county policy to secure natural areas from willing sellers.	Parks, DNR, MALC, Green Seams, Local municipalities	• Work with stakeholders to create a high-priority acquisition list in the Parks & Open Space Plan. • Work with stakeholders to acquire high priority parcels.	$65,000	$9,000,000 (for all parcels listed in SEWRPC Parks and Open Spaces Plan)

2007–2011 WORK PLAN

GOAL 3. Enhance Lake Michigan Bluff Protection Initiatives.

OBJECTIVES (Listed in order of ranked priority)	ACTIONS	WHO (Lead agency listed first)	PROGRESS TRACKING	ESTIMATED COUNTY STAFF NEEDS	ESTIMATED OTHER COSTS
Continue to improve and maintain Lake Michigan shoreline protection measures in Milwaukee County Parks, and abate shoreline erosion problems.	Toe protection; bluff slope re-grading, surface water runoff control, berms, groundwater drainage, bulkhead and groin system development; maintenance.	DTPW, Parks, WDNR, WCMP, City of MKE, ACOE	• Conduct or partner on one bluff stabilization or shoreline protection project.	$100,000 annually	$5,174,000 capital costs $536,000 annual maintenance costs
Maintain lakefront land for recreational use and access.	Enhance facilities to provide and improve access.	Parks, WDNR, WCMP, City of MKE	• Seek partnerships on projects that improve lake access.	$100,000 annually	$2,930,000 capital costs $195,000 annual maintenance costs

Note: Additional funding and planning partners could include the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program (WCMP).

2007–2011 WORK PLAN

GOAL 4. Effectively Use and Maintain the Existing Information Management Network and Establish a Land Information Web Portal to Distribute Geographic Information.

OBJECTIVES (Listed in order of ranked priority)	ACTIONS	WHO (Lead agency listed first)	PROGRESS TRACKING	ESTIMATED COUNTY STAFF NEEDS	ESTIMATED OTHER COSTS
Ensure that mapping and the GIS infrastructure are updated on a regular basis.	Enable a taskforce from various County Departments, assisted by GIS specialists, to create a priority list of data that needs updating and a timetable for updating infrastructure and data. Many of the existing data layers are layers similar to ones that local and state governmental units use. The taskforce should also coordinate and share data with these entities to ensure that efforts are not duplicated.	DTPW-ES, Parks, UWEX, SEWRPC, Local municipalities	• Create a priority list for updating GIS data. • Create a timetable for updating GIS data and infrastructure.	$70,000 annually	
Promote the effective use of the GIS by County staff, natural resource professionals, developers, and citizens.	Continue to provide training for County staff, enabling them to effectively use the GIS. Participate in local workshops or conferences to educate the public about the GIS, once it is available on the internet.	DTPW-ES, Parks, UWEX, SEWRPC, Local municipalities	• Conduct GIS training sessions for County staff. • Present a talk relating to the County's GIS and available layers at two local workshops or conferences.	$70,000 annually	
Distribute GIS data within County Departments and make available to the general public.	Create a Land Information Web portal that could make the data available via the internet.	DTPW-ES, Parks, UWEX, SEWRPC, Local municipalities	• Make GIS data available to the public via the internet early in the planning period.	$70,000 annually	$85,000 capital costs